(b) Steps being taken to augment domestic production of coal to bridge the gap between demand and supply of coal inter-alia include the following:

(i) Opening up of new mines and increasing efficiency and productivity in the existing mines by modernisation, application of new technologies and ensuring timely availability of inputs and infrastructural facilities.

(ii) Partial de-regulation of coal prices which is likely to improve the generation to internal financial resources of the coal companies which will facilitate implementation of projects. It will also improve the financial viability of new mining projects.

(iii) The capital base of Coal India Limited has been restructured which will enable it to raise additional financial resources from the capital markets which are required to add new coal production capacity.

(iv) Steps are being taken in co-ordination with the Railways to remove the transportation bottlenecks in such coalfield areas which have potential for enhanced production.

(v) Steps are being taken to remove the bottlenecks in land acquisition and forest land clearances for speedier implementation of coal projects.

(vi) Private sector companies engaged in production of iron and steel, cement and generation of power have been permitted to take up coal mining for captive consumption. This is expected to increase domestic coal production and availability.

(vii) To attract private investment in the coal sector, Government has decided to move a Bill to make the necessary legislative changes relating to coal mining to enable any Indian company to mine coal and lignite for sale.

Demand for coal by steel industry

3815. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the demand for coal by the steel industry at the end of the Ninth and Tenth Five Year Plan; and

(b) whether the steel and power companies will be given priority clearance for mining of coal for these plants?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) Working Group on coal and lignite has projected a demand of coal by steel industry at 49.60 million tonnes and 64 million tonnes respectively for terminal year of 9th Five Year Plan and 10th Five Year Plan.

(b) Coal Mines Nationalisational Act, 1973 has been amended to allow coal mining by companies engaged in the production of steel and power, for captive consumption.

Production of coal

3816. SHRI MOHINDAR SINGH KALYAN: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the total production of coal undertaken so far by various coal mines in the country, coal mine-wise;

(b) the details of schemes and programmes sponsored and being implemented by Government for the welfare of the coal mine workers;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) if not, the reason therefor; and

(e) the steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) Colliery-wise coal production in the country for the year 1995-96 is given in the Coal Directory of India, a copy of the Coal Directory for 1995-96 has been made available to the Library of the Parliament. The Coal